1. Describe the practice proposed for recognition, and list its objectives. Detail how the practice is innovative and how it promotes high student achievement.

"In 1942, The Seeing Eye began its puppy-raising program. Since then, children and their families have raised Seeing Eye puppies. When they are about eight weeks old, Seeing Eye pups go to live with volunteers. For about 16 months, the volunteers give the dogs abundant affection, teach them basic obedience and expose them to a variety of social situations." - The Seeing Eye

The Seeing Eye Puppy Project for Middle School Students is designed to implement a Community Service project for 7th and 8th grade students, using an Integrated Thematic approach.

"One of the Brain-Compatible Elements that guide the Integrating Thematic Instruction Learning Principles is providing an enriched environment for learning. Curriculum should be based on being there experiences because conceptual development is based on sensory input". A Vision for the Middle School – Ann Ross and Karen Olsen

The current Puppy Project provides an opportunity to experience cross-content curriculum activities including researching, reading, writing and public speaking skills in science, language arts, social studies, and math, while providing an opportunity for community service to students in a self-contained Special Education classroom.

In addition, this unique experience exposes the students to raising a puppy for the Seeing Eye Program for a period of sixteen to eighteen months. They are responsible for the care, training and documentation of the puppy's growth, development and behavior. During the school day the dog remains in the classroom, tied to a desk to simulate what life will be like with a blind person. He/she also learns how to behave in a setting where people are working, how to walk in crowds and how to obey simple commands.

Furthermore, the Puppy Project guides the students, through the use of cooperation, initiative, patience, perserverence, pride, problem solving, resourcefulness and responsibility, to an understanding of which personal and social behaviors will enhance their success in life.

It is our belief that the "being there" experience of the Puppy Project helps to instill in our students the experiences and opportunities they need to help them become contributing, responsible citizens of their school and community.

The objectives for this project include:

A. At the end of the project 90% of the students will score at least 50% better on the written and practical Seeing Eye Puppy Project Test.

B. At the end of the first year the students will be able to speak with some confidence, before a group, about the project. By the end of the second year their confidence and public speaking skills will have improved significantly. A public speaking scoring rubric will be used to measure speaking.

C. At the end of the project the students will understand the benefits of community service after performing approximately one hundred hours per year caring for and training the puppy.

D. At the end of the project the students will demonstrate positive growth in social, emotional and discipline expectations. Teacher evaluation in academic subjects, attendance records and discipline reports will be used as a measure.

2. List the specific *Core Curriculum Standards, including the Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards,* addressed by the practice and describe how the practice addresses those standard(s). Provide an example to substantiate your response.

Using an integrated thematic approach, the puppy-raising project for community service gives students a "real life" experience and incorporates many of the Core Curriculum Standards during the duration of the two-year project. Through this experience, students see the inter-relationship of the various subject areas and can connect the experience on a personal level. Any one of the students and his/her families can become a puppy raiser for the See Eye, Inc. after completing the program.

Language Arts Literacy: some examples
3.1 All students will speak for a variety of real purposes and audiences.
3.2 All students will listen actively in a variety of situations to information from a variety of sources.
3.3 All students will write clear, concise, organized language that varies in content and form for different audiences and purposes.
3.4 All students will view, understand and use non-textual visual information.

Students prepare speeches for presentations to various groups such as elementary classes, community service groups and other organizations upon request. Topics include history of Seeing Eye, care and training of a Seeing Eye puppy and personal experiences of raising a puppy in school. Programs and training sessions are presented to students by the area coordinator of Seeing Eye Inc. and the on-campus main puppy raiser. Students are exposed to a variety of reading material during the project including books, periodicals, newspaper articles and reference materials such as encyclopedias, almanac and dictionary. Students listen to the programs and watch the demonstration to duplicate the training presented. The students keep weekly journals that document the puppy-raising activities and the growth and development of the dog. They also write essays, reports, letters, e-mail messages to the area coordinator, and newspaper articles related to raising the puppy. Additionally, the class develops a scrapbook of puppy activities with photographs, newspaper clippings, awards and supplemental information on the progress of the project. This is shared with groups when students give presentations and demonstrations inside and outside the school setting.

Mathematics: some examples
4.1 All students will develop the ability to pose and solve mathematical problems in mathematics, other disciplines, and everyday experiences.
4.2 All students will connect mathematics to other learning by understanding the interrelationships of mathematical ideas and the roles that mathematics and mathematical modeling play in other disciplines and in life.
4.9 All students will develop an understanding of and will use measurement to describe and analyze

Students maintain a log of the cost for raising the puppy. Food, veterinary visits, toys and puppy equipment (leashes, bowls, collars) are listed so students can calculate the dollar amount of raising a dog. Weight, height, circumference of head and body limbs, length of dog and tail are recorded. Students use this data to develop graphs to track the dog's growth and development patterns. Also, the amount of food the dog eats is recorded and calculated on a monthly, weekly and daily basis. This information becomes important for puppy wellness checks by the veterinarian and when the puppy appears to be ill. Students apply the information they learn in their own personal lives when contemplating raising a puppy of their own or caring for one that is currently part of their family.

Science: some examples
5.6 All students will gain an understanding of the structure, characteristics and basic needs of organisms. Through reading and studying information on mammals, dogs in particular, students acquire information and knowledge related to different dog breeds, anatomy and an animal's basic needs for food, shelter, exercise and love. This research is utilized in demonstrations, presentations by students to groups and language arts literacy activities.

Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards: some examples
Standard #1 All students will develop career planning and readiness skills.
Guest speakers, books, Internet searches, periodical articles and video presentations give students information on possible careers involving care and training of animals. This may include careers as veterinarians, technicians, dog trainers, pet store owners/workers, wildlife professionals, zookeepers, etc.

Standard #2 All students will use technology, information and other tools.
Students in the class raising the puppy use computers to complete written work, generate graphs, develop Power Point presentations, conduct research and participate in distance learning activities.

Standard #3 All students will use critical thinking, decision-making and problem solving skills.
The teachers and main on-campus puppy raiser use strategies that challenge students in the higher level thinking skills of analysis, synthesis and evaluation when presented with problems related to raising a puppy. These have included the dog's reluctance to climb stairs, to whine and whimper in class, lack of eating, looking for attention by nudging and getting into trouble. (Chewing and ripping paper, stealing items in the classroom, wanting to be chased by someone, being uncooperative during training and creating noise with his toys during classroom instruction) Large group discussion, small group problem solving sessions, and individual thinking activities are strategies used for students to develop a plan for corrective action.

3. **Describe the educational needs of students that the practice addresses. Document the assessment measures used to determine the extent to which the objectives of the practice have been met. Provide assessments and data to show how the practice met these standards.**
Students in the self-contained Special Education classroom have various individual strengths and weaknesses. Some, for example, show advanced learning in one subject such as mathematics, but experience delayed learning in the area of Language Arts or visa versa. By participating in the Seeing Eye Puppy Project, each student is challenged to succeed through a variety of designed activities related to the project.

Although training and care of the puppy are the key components of the project, the benefits of public speaking and community service contribute to the positive growth of the Special Education student.

As a result of the project, the students have shown an improvement in attendance, behavior and desire to participate in classroom incentives.

Objective A assessment used to measure objective A (see question #1, objective A for objective wording)
Assessment: Teacher developed written and practical pre and post test.
Objective Results: At the end of the first year, all of the students showed improvement in the written part of the test and began the training program. By the end of the second year, it is expected that at least 90% of the students will score 50% or higher on the written test and demonstrate proficiency in training the dog in the basic commands of sit, forward, rest, come and stand.

Objective B assessment used to measure objective B (see question #1, objective B for objective wording)
Assessment: New Jersey Speaking Rubric
Objective Results: In the first year of the program the classroom teacher scored the individual student presentations. The majority of the scores fell within the inadequate and limited command categories. In some cases, students refused or were unable to complete the task. By the end of the second year of the project, based on the average score of two independent scorers, the majority of the students will fall in the adequate command area with some achieving the strong command. We anticipate that less than 10% of the students will be unable to complete the task, and less than 50% will score in the inadequate and limited command category.

Objective C assessment used to measure objective C (see question #1, objective C for objective wording)
Assessment: Students used personal journals to log their hours and activities.

"On November 16, 1990, President George Bush signed into law the National Community Service Act, which set aside about $62 million to encourage young people to serve their communities and schools. This amount has been increased each year since then. Schools across the country are setting up service experiences for students of all ages.
The Kid's Guide to Service Projects – Barbara Lewis

Objective Results: During the first year of the project student's hours and activities varied, based on the readiness of the dog to be trained and the individual student interest in the activities. As the year progressed, it was noted that the

students showed more of an interest to become involved in the everyday classroom procedures. Up to this point in the second year of the project, students have demonstrated a willingness to participate and are now expected to perform at least 100 hours of service to the project.

Objective D assessment used to measure objective D (see question #1 objective D for objective wording)
Objective assessment: Progress and report card comment codes, attendance records and discipline reports.

Objective Results: At the end of the first year, no student was retained because of grades or attendance. Discipline referrals were reduced after the puppy arrived. This can be attributed to teacher incentives. After the first marking period of the second year, only two of the 24 students had failing grades in academic subjects. The grades included activities specifically designed for the project. Some examples of comments most frequently noted by the teacher on student report cards were, responsible/hardworking, positive attitude, pleasure to have in class. An increased desire to come to school is evident in student attendance with only 4 of the 24 students missing more than 5 or more days of school in the first marking period. When surveyed, students indicate a need to be in school to take care of their puppy. Five students have been seen for administrative discipline during the first marking period, with only one resulting in serious consequences.

4. Describe how you would replicate the practice in another school and/ or district.

"A generous action is its own reward".
Pierre Corneille

A. Present the program to the board of education using Seeing Eye videos, student speeches and demonstrations with the puppy, and give an overview of the project's success in our school.

B. Target which classes the puppy project will be implemented in to. Regular education classes can also benefit from a project like this.

C. If the board shows interest, a staff member who is interested in being the main puppy raiser needs to be established and make contact with The Seeing Eye.

D. Have Seeing Eye present a program to the staff and student body of the prospective school.

E. Make application and complete all necessary steps to obtaining the puppy.

F. While waiting for the puppy to arrive, the staff should begin to establish strategies and assessment tools for integrating the project into their curriculum.

G. Prepare for the puppy's arrival by obtaining supplies that will be needed. Seeing Eye provides a budget for food, leashes and pays for veterinary visits. Other supplies such as a crate, toys, bowls, etc need to be borrowed or have to be donated.

H. Once the puppy arrives and is comfortable with the new surroundings, implementation of the project should begin. Support concerning training and care of the puppy will come from The Seeing Eye. We will advise and support the class on matters involving curriculum, classroom issues and general concerns.